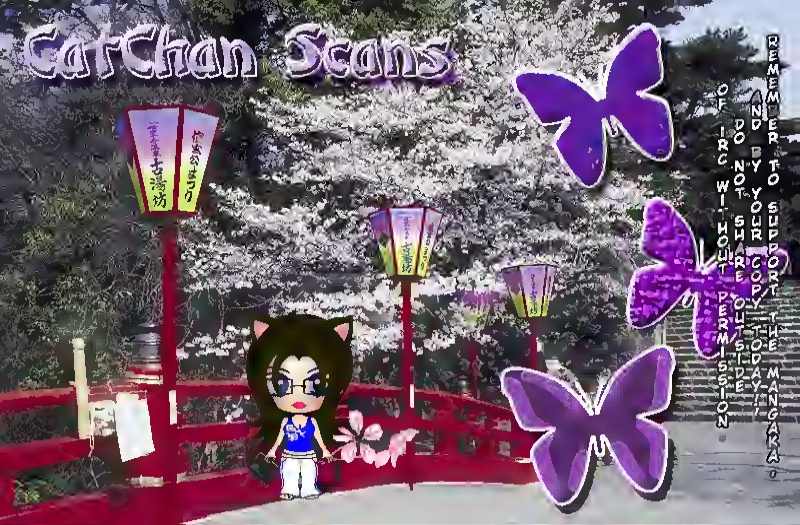
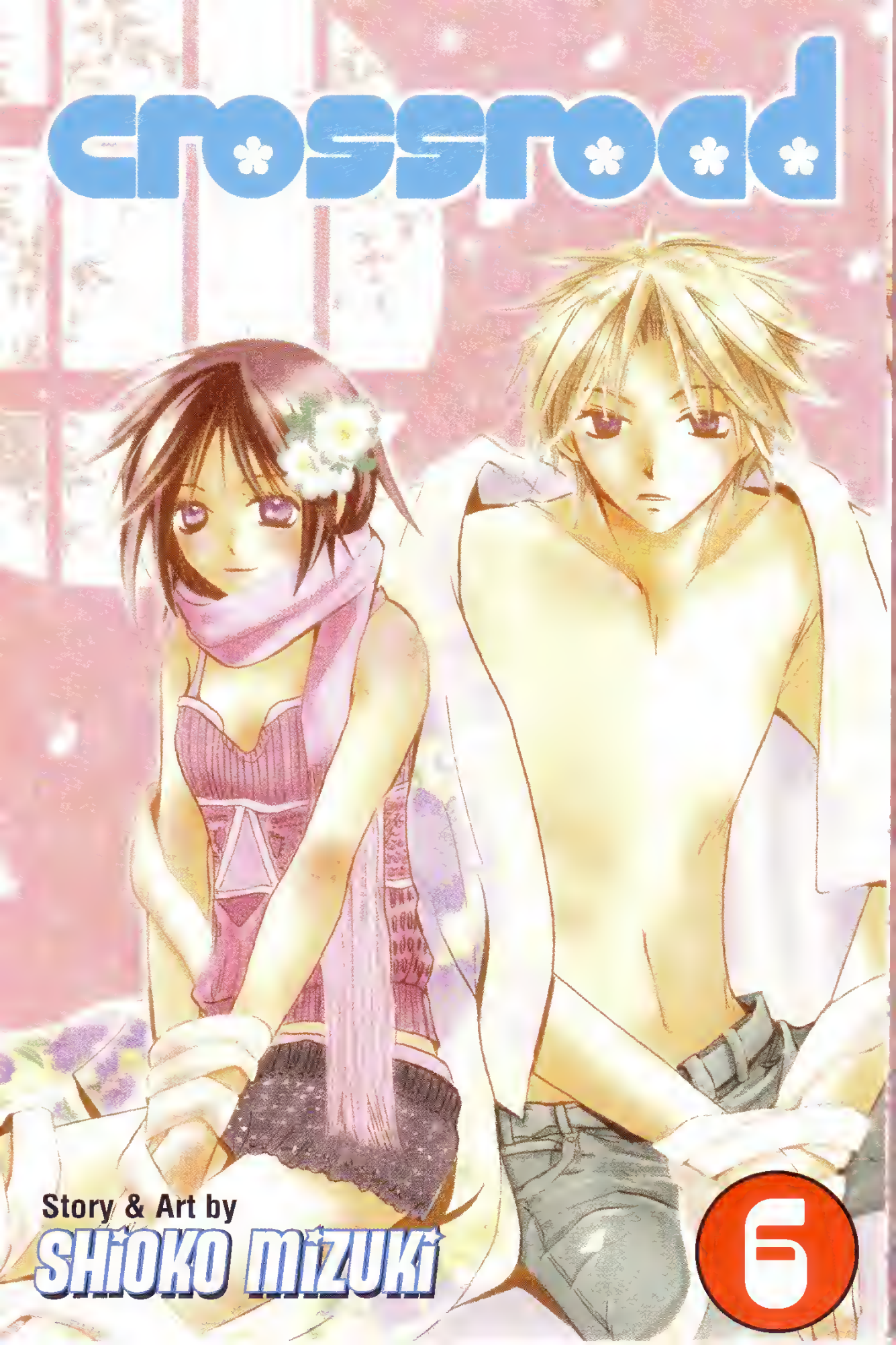

CatChan Scans
REMEMBER TO SUPPORT THE MANGAKA
AND BUY YOUR COPY OF THE GOD AVAILABLE
DO NOT SHARE OUTSIDE OF IRC WITHOUT PERMISSION

crossroad



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The Story So Far...

Kajitsu, Taro, Natsu, and Satsuki are four siblings not tied by blood, but living together with their step-mother, Rumiko, under one roof. Shocked by Natsu hanging out with Erica, Kajitsu runs away from home and begins living with Akai-Sensei. After her teacher's kindness relieves Kajitsu's anxiety, she finally feels ready to face the world again. While Kajitsu and Akai-Sensei are together, a classmate spots them...

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Cast of Characters

Taro Toda
The eldest son in the Toda household, and self-proclaimed "boss." His motto is "No Incest in the House."

Erica
A classmate of Natsu, who's taking steps to make him her man. She has many female enemies.

Akai-sensei
The calligraphy teacher at Kajitsu's school. Will his alluring scent trap Kajitsu, too?

Natsu
Kajitsu's younger step-brother, of the same age. He's the valedictorian at school for which he gets a lot of unwanted attention.

Kajitsu Toda
A 16-year-old girl who is worried about her naturally gloomy attitude and is striving to make a change in herself.

Concerning Honorifics

At Go! Comi, we do our best to ensure that our translations read seamlessly in English while respecting the original Japanese language and culture. To this end, the original honorifics (the suffixes found at the end of characters' names) remain intact. In Japan, where politeness and formality are more integrated into every aspect of the language, honorifics give a better understanding of character relationships. They can be used to indicate both respect and affection. Whether a person addresses someone by first name or last name also indicates how close their relationship is.

Here are some of the honorifics you might encounter in reading this book:

-san: This is the most common and neutral of honorifics. The polite way to address someone you're not on close terms with is to use "-san." It's kind of like Mr. or Ms., except you can use "-san" with first names as easily as family names.

-chan: Used for friendly familiarity, mostly applied towards young girls. "-chan" also carries a connotation of cuteness with it, so it is frequently used with nicknames towards both boys and girls (such as "Na-chan" for "Natsu").

-kun: Like "-chan," it's an informal suffix for friends and classmates, only "-kun" is usually associated with boys. It can also be used in a professional environment by someone addressing a subordinate.

-sama: Indicates a great deal of respect or admiration.

Sempai: In school, "sempai" is used to refer to an upperclassman or club leader. It can also be used in the workplace by a new employee to address a mentor or staff member with seniority.

Sensei: Teachers, doctors, writers or any master of a trade are referred to as "sensei." When addressing a manga creator, the polite thing to do is attach "-sensei" to the manga-ka's name (as in Mizuki-sensei).

Onii: This is the more casual term for an older brother. Usually you'll see it with an honorific attached, such as "onii-chan."

Onee: The casual term for older sister, it's used like "onii" with honorifics.

[blank]: Not using an honorific when addressing someone indicates that the speaker has permission to speak intimately with the other person. This relationship is usually reserved for close friends and family.

#27 Confession

Chapter 27: Confession

Chapter 27.

*I'm pretty happy with the way I've been able to capture the true essence of Aka-san. Although he may have seemed innocent, I feel like I've got down his alluring side. I got his first name "Yuu" from some famous actor and no, I'm not talking about *Aida Yuu.

Confession.

*See translator's notes

*See translator's notes
MOM SAID I SHOULD BRING YOU SOME.
EDAMAME!*
OH, RIGHT! HERE!
SO? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
SLAM
.....
THAT WASN'T VERY NICE. WASN'T THAT A GIRL?
SHE'LL BE FINE. SHE'S TOUGH.
ERK!
MOM'S BEEN CRYING UP A STORM!
WE HAVEN'T SEEN MUCH OF YOU SINCE YOU QUIT TEACHING CALLIGRAPHY AT SCHOOL
What do you expect? I can't pick up a side job
WHAT THE HECK IS HIS NAME?
THAT BOY.. I WAS DOING CLASSROOM CHORES WITH HIM
THE FIRST
APE
NO, I AM NOT FINE.
NOOOOO
Huh, so Shinobu's first name is what, Yuuji? Huh? Huh? What do I mean?

WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' OUT HERE ANYWAY? AREN'T YOU GOING INSIDE?
SORRY, AM I INTERRUPTING SOMETHING? ♡
YUUJI...
...SAN?
SNEAK
SNEAK
SNEAK
AW, CRAP.
REALLY?
WHERE?
LOOK, HORIEMON'S* WALKING BY.
*See translator's notes
SHOVE
THUD

...OH.

It's "Tsushima"
NOW, WHAT WAS IT?
Uh...
I'M PRETTY SURE IT STARTED WITH "TA"...
Off you go! Off!
YOU'RE NEVER HOME ANY OTHER TIME.
AND JUST WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT THIS LATE?
WHAT? WHERE?
HEY, ISN'T THAT HORIEMON OVER THERE? ♡
I'M LEAVING NOW, SO WHY DON'T YOU-- ♡
NOW LET'S JUST SEE WHAT SORT OF GIRL HE'S GOT. ♡
Bam
IS THAT ALL YOU CAME TO SAY? YOU CAN GO HOME NOW.
SORRY, LITTLE MISSY!
THE FIRST AID

OH, COME ON! YOU'RE IMAGINING THINGS!
KNOCK IT OFF!
LOOK AROUND
BUT THIS PLACE SURE SMELLS LIKE TWO PEOPLE LIVE HERE
PANIC
LOOK AROUND
SO YOU TWO LIVE TOGETHER?
O-OF COURSE NOT!
I JUST COME OVER EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE TO HANG OUT!
THIS WAS A TOTAL COINCI-DENCE!
NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO BRAG ABOUT MY HOUSEKEEPING SKILLS!
I JUST LOVE TODA-SAN'S HOMEMADE PICKLED CELERY ♡
CRUNCH
MUNCH
IF I TELL SOMEONE ABOUT THIS, RIGHT?
YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN..
Damn it, Denzel! You big idiot!
YOU TWO EVEN SHARE YOUR PICKLES?
THAT'S GOTTA BE SOME TOP SECRET STUFF!
DAMN IT.
THIS SUCKS.
WHOOOOOA!
NO WAY! TODA, IS THAT YOU?
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING HERE? THIS IS UNBELIEV-ABLE! NO WAY!
HERE, HAVE SOME TEA.
THUNK
EXPLOSIVE SITUATION
GLARE
COULD YOU TWO STOP THE DEATH GLARE? IT'S CREEPING ME OUT.
ER...
OKAY, UH...

BECAUSE I'M A GIRL, I'LL HAVE TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL AND LIVE ON MY OWN.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I'M WORRIED ABOUT TODA! SHE'S A GIRL!
I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU!
NOT LIKE I EVER WANTED TO BE A TEACHER ANYWAY.
YOU WANNA LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG? BY ALL MEANS.
I'LL LIVE A QUIET LIFE, DEEP IN THE DARKNESS. MUMBLE
I'LL HAVE TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY...
...BEFORE I CAUSE SENSEI ANY MORE TROUBLE.
MUMBLE MUMBLE
Er...
YOU CAN PROSECUTE ME, OR DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!
SO, THERE!
THIS IS MY CHOICE! I WON'T HOLD IT AGAINST YOU!
DOOM

SENSEI?
OH, I'M SURE...
...I KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN
WAIT, SENSEI!
You're ten years too young to think you can threaten me!
THEY'LL FIND YOUR BONES BURIED IN THE MOUNTAINS 25 YEARS FROM NOW! THAT'S WHAT!
DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS!
WAIT! STOP!
I DECIDED TO LIVE HERE. NONE OF THIS IS SENSEI'S FAULT!
DON'T SAY ANYTHING THAT'LL GET HIM IN TROUBLE!

WELL...
LOOKS LIKE I'LL HEAD HOME FOR TONIGHT.
OKAY, BUT...
WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?
IT'S TSUSHIMA.
OH, RIGHT!
YOU AND I HAD A CLASS TOGETHER...
...OUR FIRST YEAR, TOO.
I STILL DON'T KNOW ALL THE 2ND YEARS' NAMES YET!
BUT DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
THE FIRST AFE

HOW CAN YOU JOKE ABOUT THIS?
I'LL BE SENDING LETTERS FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL. SO CAN I HAVE YOUR ADDRESS?
Can you really be that dumb?
ARE YOU TRYING TO GET TODA IN TROUBLE!?
THIS OUGHT TO BE FUN.
CHUCKLE
AW, HOW COULD YOU WEAKEN MY POSITION LIKE THIS!?
WHAT IS WITH YOU GUYS!? AW, JUST FORGET ABOUT IT!

I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
IT WOULDN'T HELP ANYONE EVEN IF I DID
AS FOR YUUJI-SAN.
I'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE I WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH
THIS GUY HAS...
...A LOT OF SECRETS
It's taken treating me to yakiniku to keep me quiet about it all.
*See translator's notes
TODA.
AREN'T YOU GOING HOME, TOO?
OR ARE YOU STAYING HERE?
IF YOU'RE GOING HOME...
...I COULD WALK YOU.

IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN.
YOU NEVER LOOKED AT ANYONE, AND YOU NEVER SEEMED TO WANT TO TALK, EITHER
THAT'S WHY I'M KINDA HAPPY WHEN I GET TO TALK TO YOU NOW.
YOU'VE REALLY CHANGED RECENTLY.
I DUNNO. I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE YOU CHANGED YOUR HAIR.
It used to be like this before.

COUGH
COUGH
PUFF
I WILL SOMEDAY.
WHEW
...WHY DID YOU QUIT FOR A WHILE?
IF YOU LIKE IT SO MUCH...
BUT WHY DID YOU STILL QUIT?
YEAH, I KNOW THAT MUCH.
BECAUSE YOU SAID YOU DON'T LIKE SMOKE.
GOOD QUESTION.
MAYBE BECAUSE I WANTED TO KISS YOU?
SENSEI?
I THOUGHT YOU'D QUIT SMOKING.
YEAH, I'M GOING HOME.
BUT...
I...

BOY, ARE YOU DUMBER THAN I THOUGHT.
OH, THIS OLD THING? WELL, THERE ARE SO MANY THIEVES THESE DAYS, YOU HAVE TO CARRY ALL YOUR STUFF WITH YOU.
THAT'S A PRETTY BIG BAG YOU'VE GOT THERE
AREN'T YOU SCARED?
I KNOW I WAS TALKING BIG BEFORE, BUT...
...WOULDN'T YOU BE SCARED TO THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY?
IF SOMEONE ELSE BESIDES TSUSHIMA...
...LIKE SOMEONE FROM SCHOOL SAW US, IT'D BE A BIG PROBLEM

SENSEI...
WHY DID YOU SAY YOU WANTED TO TAKE A WALK?

AND I HAVE SOMEONE... I LOVE EVEN MORE THAN PAPA NOW.
BUT NOW I HAVE TO GRADUATE.
...YOU LOOKED LIKE MY BELOVED PAPA.
BECAUSE I ALWAYS THOUGHT...

...YEAH.
...I CAN PROTECT AT LEAST YOU.
YOU KNOW...
I WASN'T LYING!
I ALWAYS LIKED YOU, SENSEI!
FROM THE FIRST MOMENT WE MET.
QUIT MAKING ME CRY, SENSEI!
THAT STILL MAKES ME HAPPY, EVEN IT'S A LIE.
HA HA!

SENSEI.
I'M SORRY... I'M STILL JUST A KID.
BUT THANKS TO YOU ..
...I FEEL LIKE...
...I CAN FINALLY...
...FORGIVE ADULTS.

HEH HEH!
WHAT, ARE YOU JEALOUS?
SO YOU CHOSE YOUR LITTLE BROTHER, AFTER ALL!
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
I LIKE YOU.
NATSU'S WAITING FOR ME.
I HAVE TO GO HOME.

I PASSED THE RAILWAY CROSSING, AND AFTER WALKING FOR A WHILE CAME UPON A LARGE NATIONAL HIGHWAY.
I'M WALKING HOME!
THERE'RE NO MORE TRAINS RUNNING I'LL DRIVE YOU HOME.
WHAT, ARE YOU CRAZY?
YOU KNOW HOW LONG THAT'LL TAKE?
CLATCH

...IT DIDN'T MATTER IF YOU WERE A KID OR A GROWN-UP.
TO ME...
EITHER WAY, YOU WERE SOMEONE SPECIAL.

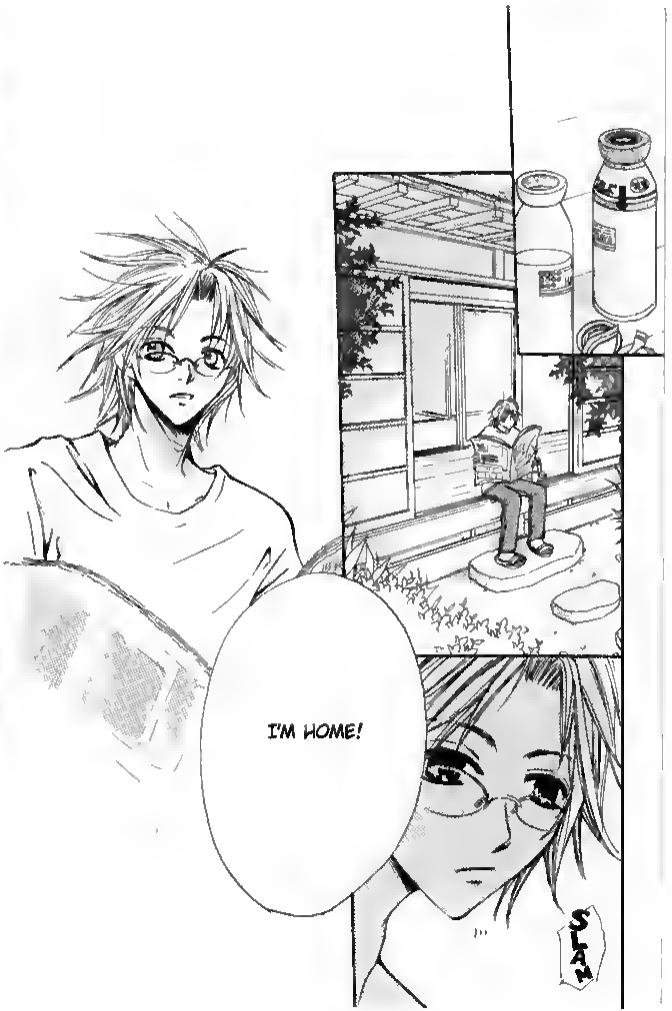
I RETRACED MY STEPS OVER AND OVER
MY FEET STARTED TO DRAG...
.. BUT I KEPT WALKING
I SHOULD GO BACK...
LIKE THEY SAY, BETTER TO START OVER WHEN YOU'RE LOST.
WOBBLE WOBBLE
IT'S MORNING!
WHY AM I WALKING WITH SO MUCH STUFF TO CARRY!?
BOY, AM I BUSHED!
PHEW...
OW, MY POOR FEET...
THROB
THROB

I WALKED THROUGH TOWNS...
...I'D NEVER BEEN TO BEFORE. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THEIR NAMES.
I'M SURE I'LL GET HOME..
...IF I FOLLOW THIS
AT LEAST, I HOPE SO
I GOT LOST AGAIN AND AGAIN.
NOW, LET'S SEE...
WHAT TRAIN STATION IS THIS?
MAP
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE I WAS FOR A WHILE.
NO WAY! THE HIGHWAY ENDED!
WHY!?
SHOCK
I WONDER IF THIS IS THE RIGHT WAY.
IT'S OKAY. THE EARTH IS ROUND, RIGHT?
I'LL GET THERE SOMEHOW!
ALL RIGHT!
At least, I should

...IT'S BECAUSE YOU WERE WAITING FOR ME.
AND I REALIZED...

FOR SOME REASON, THE TOWN I'D GROWN TO KNOW SO WELL ..
...LOOKED SO PRECIOUS.
I ACTUALLY MADE IT
AMAZ-ING...
SO VERY PRECIOUS.
I THOUGHT ABOUT..
...WHY IT WAS THIS PRECIOUS TO ME.

...MY VERY BELOVED...
WELCOME BACK, KAJITSU.
...PERSON.
I'M HOME...

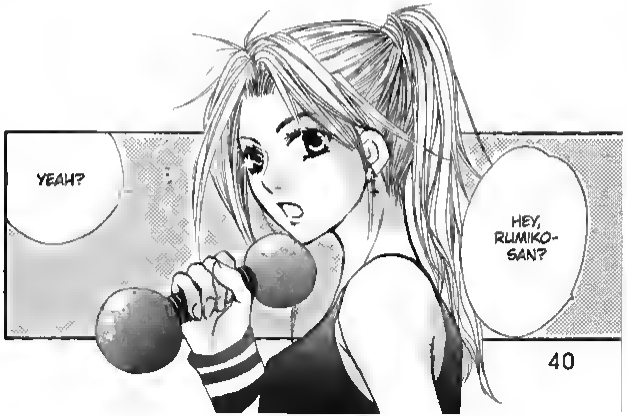

I'M HOME!
SLAM

I'M SCARED, BUT...
...I DON'T WANT TO RUN AWAY.
I CAN'T.
I DON'T WANT TO HIDE IT OR LOCK IT AWAY ANYMORE.
I'M SCARED, BUT I KNOW I CAN DO THIS.

YOU'RE ALWAYS RIGHT, NATSU.
BUT YOU WERE WRONG ABOUT ONE THING.
...MY FEELINGS WILL NEVER CHANGE.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU TRY TO KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM ME...
...BUT I FINALLY...
...MADE IT BACK TO YOU, NATSU.
I TOOK THE LONG WAY AROUND, BUT...

UH, NO NEED TO CRY. REALLY.
THANK YOU, GOD!
AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS OF BEING CALLED A FAKE MOTHER! AT LAST, I'VE BEEN ACCEPTED AS A REAL MOTHER!
ER, LOOK..
Would you please listen?
C'MON, KID! CRY YOUR EYES OUT IN MAMA'S BOSOM!
SORRY, BUT I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING
SAY WHAT!?
..RUN-RUN'S IN THE MIDDLE OF HER BUST-UPPER EXERCISES! ♪
SORRY, BUT RIGHT NOW..
I WAS WONDER-ING...
CAN KAJITSU AND I...
..GET MARRIED WHEN WE'RE OLDER?

I'LL STAY CLOSE TO YOU...
...AND KEEP LOVING YOU.


YEAH?
HEY, RUMIKO-SAN?

I DON'T WANT TO RUN AWAY.
...I'M AFRAID...
...HE'LL HATE ME
TEENAGE REBELLION.
I'M SURPRISED, NA-CHAN. YOU DIDN'T SEEM TO BE HAVING THAT SORT OF THING.
WHAT SORT OF THING?

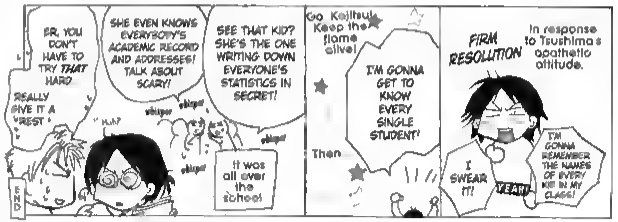
ER, YES I SUPPOSE YOU CAN.
What brought this on?
IN THAT CASE, I SHOULD ASK TO BECOME PART OF SUBARU'S FAMILY
WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT BEFORE?
YOU'RE NOT TIED BY BLOOD, AND AS AN ADOPTED CHILD, YOU'VE BEEN TAKEN OUT OF THE FAMILY REGISTRY.
Does he really plan on marrying her?
...WHEN I TOLD HIM I HAD A GIRLFRIEND
HE LOOKED SO HAPPY...
NOT LIKE TARO WOULD EVER ALLOW IT.
AS LONG AS IT'S ANYONE BESIDES KA-JITSU...
...I'M WITH YOU 100%!
I..
I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO...
...DEFY HIM.
TARO-CHAN'S ALWAYS BEEN THE UPSTANDING RIGHTEOUS OLDER BROTHER, HASN'T HE?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
Though I'm not sure about his methods.
BUT AT THIS RATE...

A
B

I'M PREPARING FOR A FIGHT.
GULP
WHAT'S UP, NATSU? I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU WORK OUT BEFORE.
REALLY, A FIGHT? WITH WHO?
huff!
huff!
YOU, TARO.
TURN
GULP
?

crossroad Chapter 28 When a Boy Cuts His Hair

IT LOOKS SO SO SO SO GOOD!
BLUB BLUB
GUESS IT DOESN'T LOOK THAT GREAT.
SHEESH, TALK ABOUT NO REACTION!
Forget it, I'm asking someone younger
HEY! SATSUKI!
HUH?
OH, IT LOOKS FINE I GUESS.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WELL?
WHAT? IS THAT ALL?


ER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO TRY THAT HARD
REALLY GIVE IT A REST
SHE EVEN KNOWS EVERYBODY'S ACADEMIC RECORD AND ADDRESSES! TALK ABOUT SCARY!
SEE THAT KID? SHE'S THE ONE WRITING DOWN EVERYONE'S STATISTICS IN SECRET!
whisper
It was all over the school
END
Go Kajitsu! Keep the flame alive!
Then...
I'M GONNA GET TO KNOW EVERY SINGLE STUDENT!
FIRM RESOLUTION
In response to Tsushima's apathetic attitude.
I SWEAR !!!
YEAH!
I'M GONNA REMEMBER THE NAMES OF EVERY KID IN MY CLASS!

NO! THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!
LET'S ALL GO TOGETHER, THEN!
OH, RIGHT!
IF YOU'RE GOING TO GO, YOU SHOULD TAKE YOUR GIRL-FRIEND!
WHA--?
The Three-Eyed one.*
*See translator's notes
WE SHOULD GO, TOO!
FLOP
SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING TO HIM!
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
He's gotta be doing this on purpose, right?
ERICA DOESN'T HAVE ANY GIRL FRIENDS, SO IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR HER!
WHY NOT? IT'LL BE GREAT!
PLEASE?
BESIDES...
...WANTED TO SEE YOU IN A SWIMSUIT, KAJITSU.
I'VE ALWAYS ...

HUH?
IS SATSUKI OUT?
BUT BECAUSE NATSU ALREADY HAS A GIRL-FRIEND...
THAT WAS MY LOVE CONFESSION.
—AND KEEP LOVING YOU.
I'LL STAY CLOSE TO YOU...
SHE WENT TO THE POOL WITH SOME FRIENDS
I UNDERSTAND WHY HE HAS TO KEEP HIS DISTANCE.
THAT'S A GREAT IDEA!
THE POOL, HUH?

EVEN IF THAT SMILE...
I CAN'T HATE HIM...
...EVEN IF HE'S NOT MINE.
YOUR HAIRCUT LOOKS GOOD ON YOU
IT'S.. CUTE
MUMBLE
No! I really am feeling dizzy!
Were you faking it just now?
...ISN'T MINE, EITHER.

FLOP
KAJITSU?
WHAT AM I THINKING?
MY LITTLE BROTHER...
NO
SIGH
AFTER YOU MADE THAT CUTE FACE!
I DON'T WANT TO GO OUT TODAY
NO CAN DO.
I'M GETTING DIZZY
BUT, I DON'T HATE HIM.
NATSU'S TOO CUTE
AND TOO KIND.
MAYBE YOU HAVE A COLD
YOU OKAY?

HE FELL ASLEEP WHEN HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE MEETING SOMEONE!?
HE'S SLEEPING!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
ZZZ...
I THINK IT'S ADORABLE
ZZZ...
POP
...OH.
PAT
Water Paradise
I LOVE HIM.
look

HE CAN DO WHATEVER HE WANTS WITH HIS HAIR.
WITHOUT EVEN LETTING YOUR GIRL-FRIEND KNOW!?
YOU CUT IT WITHOUT ASKING!?
THANKS I JUST DID IT THIS MORNING.
WHATEVER
RIGHT, ERICA?
WOULDN'T YOU MIND IF YOUR GIRLFRIEND SUDDENLY CUT HER HAIR OR CHANGED HER FACE!?
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
TMP TMP TMP
TREMBLE TREMBLE
DAMN COUPLE IN DISGUISE!
THAT GIVES US LESS THAN TWO HOURS.
REALLY ?
SUPER CROWDED
We have reached maximum capacity
I FORGOT TO MENTION, MY PART-TIME JOB STARTS AT FIVE O'CLOCK.
I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE AT HALF PAST FOUR.

MORNING.
Kiss
Humph!
JUST WAITING FOR HAYAMI.
S' WERE OKAY. YOU BUSY?
SORRY WE'RE LATE
LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.
YOU CUT YOUR HAIR
I DIDN'T KNOW

RUB RUB RUB
MY EYES CAN'T STAY STILL!
THEY'LL TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.
MM. PRETTY WEIRD.
HOW DO THEY FEEL?
Thank you and come again!
Eyeglasses
THAT'S... SO... ADORABLE!
TO BE HONEST, I INVITED KAJITSU, TOO.
TO COME TO THE POOL, I MEAN.

...I JUST HAVE TO GO PICK THEM UP.
THEY'RE ALL READY FOR ME, SO...
WELL, THERE'S THE EYEGLASS STORE.
WAS THERE ANYWHERE ELSE YOU WANTED TO GO TO?
...WE'LL HAVE THIRTY MINUTES TO USE THE POOL AND THEN GO HOME
AFTER WE WAIT IN LINE, GET CHANGED, AND TAKE A SHOWER...
Hmm...
SEE...
...I'M GOING TO GET CONTACTS.

WHAT THE HECK...
...IS HE THINKING?
IS THAT SO?
OH.
Monotone voice
WHAT A HUGE HOUSE!
WOW!
WHAT TOTAL BULL!
MY, MY, MY. JUST LOOK AT ALL THIS DUST.
ERICA WAS JUST SAYING HOW MUCH SHE WANTED TO SEE YOU!
SORRY FOR BARGING IN.
SNEAK
WIPE
NO!
I WANT YOU TWO TO GET ALONG RIGHT NOW!
SERIOUS
WAIT A MINUTE HERE.

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA! KAJITSU'S GOT NOTHING TO DO AT HOME, ANYWAY!
LET'S GO!
WHAT!?
REALLY?
THEN, HOW ABOUT YOU COME OVER NOW?
ER, BUT...
I WAS JUST BEING POLITE.
I KEEP THINKING I'D LIKE TO HANG OUT WITH HER SOMETIME
HOW'S YOUR SISTER DOING, BY THE WAY?
Invited her huh?
And so...
I'M HOME!
I BROUGHT SOME FRIENDS OVER, TOO!

THEN, WHY ARE YOU DATING NATSU?
OH!
DOWN THE HALL ON THE END IT'S THE MIDDLE DOOR ON THE LEFT.
WHERE'S TODA-KUN'S ROOM?
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND IF I TAKE A LOOK.
I DON'T THINK I'D EVEN CARE IF I DIDN'T HAVE A BOYFRIEND.
BUT I DON'T NEED FRIENDS.
WEIRDOS
WHAT ARE THEY BOTH THINK-ING?
PHEW..
BACK IN JUNIOR HIGH... ...THERE WAS THIS SEMPAI ERICA REALLY LIKED.
Hey! Don't go in there without asking!

A REAL PORCH!
WHOA.
Like in an apart-ment.
NO WAY!
DON'T GIVE ME THAT!
YES WAY!
NO, NO, NO!
Looks like it's back to the drawing board.
TODA-KUN SAID HE WANTED ME TO HAVE MORE FEMALE FRIENDS.
WONDER
WANDER
SIGH
SHEESH! WHAT'S NATSU THINKING?
My eyes keep leaking, so I'm going to rinse them out.
SO HE WAS WORRIED.
HAYAMI'S THE ONLY GIRL WHO HANGS OUT WITH ME.

THAT'S WHEN...
...HE STARTED SELLING HER AROUND.
BUT EVEN BEFORE THAT...
...THEY'D PLACE BETS ON HOW SOON SHE'D SLEEP WITH HIM.
AND SELL HER FOR WHATEVER THE GUY WAS WILLING TO PAY.
HE'D TELL HIS BUDDIES, "SHE'LL DO ANYTHING I SAY."
HE'D TAKE MONEY TO TELL HOW SHE WAS IN BED.
THEY EVEN TRIED TAKING PICTURES OF HER, BUT THANK GOODNESS SHE MADE THEM STOP
AFTER ALL THAT, ERICA JUST SMILED.

ERICA DIDN'T KNOW WHY HE DID, BUT SHE WAS SUPER HAPPY IT'D BEEN A ONE-SIDED LOVE UNTIL THEN.
THEN ONE DAY, HE STARTED ACTING REALLY NICE TO HER AND THEY STARTED GOING OUT.
...HE BARELY NOTICED SHE EVEN EXISTED.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH ERICA FOLLOWED HIM AROUND...
BUT...

YES, REALLY! LOOK, I KNOW I SAY I LIKE NATSU. HECK, I'LL EVEN SAY I *LOVE* HIM!
BUT... EVEN AFTER THAT...
..NATSU'S ATTITUDE HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL!
IF HE REALLY *DID* LOVE ME, HE WOULD'VE CHANGED A LITTLE, RIGHT?
Insistent!
HE EVEN TOLD THAT TO ERICA. I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE YOU.
BUT TODA LIKES *YOU*, RIGHT?
WHAT!?
TH- THAT'S JUST AS FAMILY! RIGHT!
OH, REALLY?
...ERICA WOULD GO OUT WITH HIM.
...I DEFINITELY DON'T THINK...

...TO REALIZE WHAT WAS HAPPENING, BEFORE IT GOT ANY WORSE.
SHE SAYS IT'S BECAUSE SHE WAS LUCKY ENOUGH...
EVEN AFTER WHAT HE DID, SHE NEVER SAID ANYTHING BAD ABOUT THAT GUY.
...ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL THIS?
WHY...
OH!
AND EVEN IF HE WAS THAT AWFUL...
HE'S NOT LIKE THAT.
NATSU'S DIFFER-ENT.

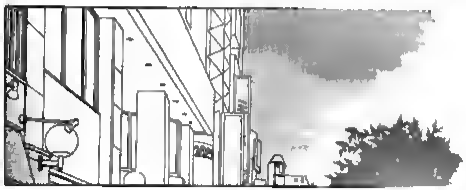
I JUST DON'T GET YOU!
ERICA, WHY DON'T YOU STAY OVER AND HAVE SOME DINNER?
OKAY, GIRLS. I'M GOING TO MY PART-TIME JOB NOW
OKAY! BYE-BYE!
I'M REALLY BUSY HERE, SO WOULD YOU MIND HELPING OUT A LITTLE?
YOU FOOL!
.....
Hmph!
AW, SHUT UP! GO HOME, ALREADY!
SMILE
YOUR BIG SISTER'S HOMEMADE COOKING?
I GUESS I WOULDN'T MIND A MEAL HERE.

BUT HE HAS CHANGED.
HASN'T HE?
JUST LOOK AT HIM.
OH.
YOU MEAN HIS HAIR...
...AND GLASSES?
RATTLE

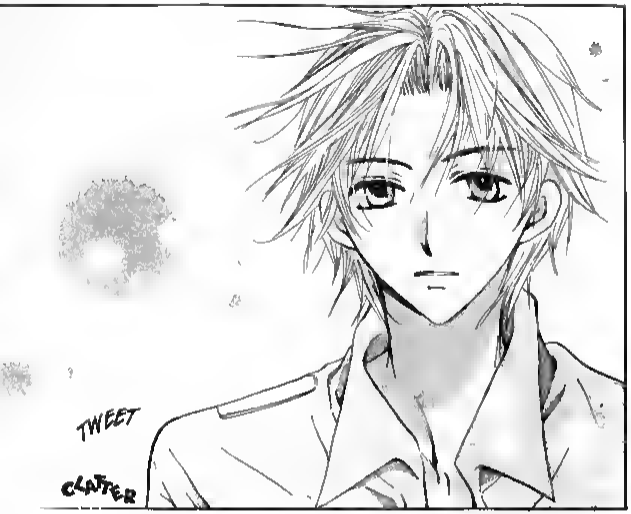
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY THING I HATE AROUND HERE
Now shut up and just walk!
YOU REALLY DON'T LIKE ME, DO YOU?
PROBABLY BETTER OFF THAN YOU AND ME BEING TOGETHER.
I HOPE THOSE TWO WILL BE OKAY ON THEIR OWN.
SORRY, BUT I DON'T HAVE AS MUCH TIME TO KILL AS YOU.
YOU KNOW, HAYAMI-SAN, YOU COULD'VE STAYED FOR DINNER, TOO
Timidly timidly
HMPH
Err...
Great, what should I do now?

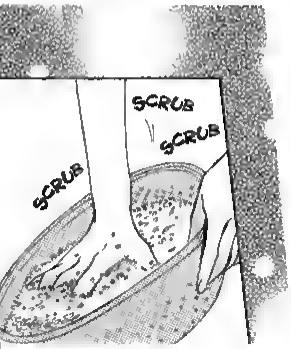
THEN, WHY DID YOU COME ALL THE WAY TO THE TRAIN STATION?
YOU MEAN YOU'RE NOT RIDING THE TRAIN? WHAT ABOUT YOUR JOB?
OH, I WORK AT THE CONVENIENCE STORE, LIKE, THREE MINUTES FROM MY HOUSE
I'LL STOP HERE.
OKAY, THEN

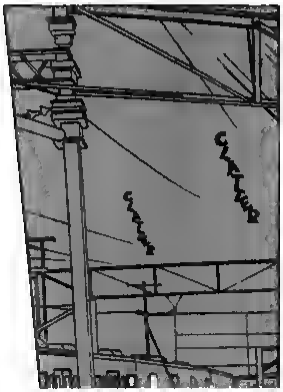
BOY, AM I STARVED!
AND SORRY, BUT NO THANKS
I CAN'T COOK.
THE ONLY THING I'M GOOD FOR IN THE KITCHEN, IS EATING. SO GOOD LUCK!
SNIFFLE
SNIFFLE
AWW...
PLEASE, TAKE HER WITH YOU...
THEN GET OUT OF HERE ALREADY!
UGH! NO WAY!
MY NAILS WILL GET DIRTY.
TODAY WE'RE HAVING CURRY! PEEL THE POTATOES!
JUST WHAT KINGDOM ARE YOU FROM, PRINCESS!?



YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A HYPOCRITE!
YOU JUST WANT TO LOOK GOOD IN FRONT OF ERICA AND YOUR OLDER SISTER!
ERICA ...
ERICA KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT..
...HOW I LIKE KAJITSU...
...AND HOW I WENT OUT WITH HER TO DISTRACT ME FROM KAJITSU.
IT WAS JUST ON A WHIM!
NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE.
...ASKING ME OUT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
BUT ERICA'S THE ONE I DON'T UNDER-STAND...
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I HATE ABOUT YOU!
THAT'S ..
I NEVER ASKED YOU TO DO THAT!
I THOUGHT I'D.. WALK YOU HOME?
IT'S NOT LIKE IT WAS ANY BIG TROUBLE...
Uhmph, I got her angry again.
...THE MORE I KNOW THAT ERICA WILL LIKE YOU!
YOU THREW HER AWAY IN THE FIRST PLACE!
I DON'T SEE WHY SHE SHOULD, THOUGH!
...ABOUT THIS SIDE OF YOU...
THE MORE I KNOW...


TWEET
CLATTER


SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB


CLATTER
CLATTER

IF IT WOULD HELP ERICA TO THROW HER AWAY NOW...
...THEN I'LL DO WHATEVER I HAVE TO.
RIGHT NOW, ERICA NEEDS ME MORE THAN ANY-THING.
SHE'LL NEVER SAY IT, BUT YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHEN YOU SEE US TOGETHER.
I DON'T KNOW WHY SHE DOES, BUT...
...THAT'S THE FEELING I GET.

Leave me alone.
PUFF
LOOK WHO'S THE MOMMY! ♫
PUF
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
WELCOME HOME HOW WAS THE POOL?
YOU CAN PUT YOUR SWIMSUIT IN THE WASHING MACHINE.
I AL-READY DID!
I'M HUNGRY!
DINNER WILL BE READY IN ABOUT 35 MINUTES
OKAY?
I'm home!
RATTLE
I BET YOU'LL THINK TWICE ONCE YOU MEET THE TYRANT OF THE HOUSE
WELL, SPEAK OF THE DEVIL..
I DON'T HAVE ANY BROTHERS OR SISTERS.
IT MUST BE NICE HAVING SUCH A BIG FAMILY
And so many plates!

I HAD NO IDEA THERE WAS A WOMEN OUT THERE EVEN LESS FITTING THAN MOM.
YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO CLEAN RICE WITH DETERGENT?
A GIRL WHO DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO CLEAN RICE!? UNBELIEV-ABLE!
FORGET IT. JUST GO WATCH TELEVISION IN THE OTHER ROOM
I'M SMARTER THAN YOU THINK
Hm?
OF COURSE I KNOW HOW TO WASH RICE.
ROGER THAT!
TUGTUG
ERICA DOESN'T KNOW THAT WHEN SATSUKI SAYS "PRETTY" SHE MEANS "SOMEONE WITH A LOT OF MAKEUP ON."
CHUCKLE
CHUCKLE
CHUCKLE
What'd you use for your foundation?
THIS IS YOUR LITTLE SISTER? UNLIKE YOUR BIG SISTER, YOU'RE A SMART GIRL RAISED WITH A GREAT SENSE OF AESTHETICS
Your eyeliner is pretty!
Good girl!
WHO'S THIS PRETTY LADY?

NATSU HARDLY TALKS WITH ONII-CHAN ANY MORE.
HMM
LATELY... THEY HAVEN'T BEEN, THOUGH
AND I HEARD HIM SAY SOMETHING ABOUT.. .. SIGNING UP FOR A FIGHT.
WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON BETWEEN THOSE TWO
.....
HE'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I IMAGINED.
HE'S THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF NATSU.
I THOUGHT HE'D BE MORE LIKE THE EGGHEAD TYPE.
BUT STRANGELY ENOUGH, THEY GET ALONG PRETTY WELL.

Wah ha ha ha!
SURPRISE
SORRY, I THOUGHT I'D GET HOME EARLY WITH THE EARLY SHIFT.
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
SO WE HAVE A GUEST, HUH?
HEY THERE!
THIS IS ERICA-SAN.
SHE'S NATSU'S GIRL-FRIEND.
WELCOME BACK, ONII-CHAN
ONII-CHAN, DINNER'S READY.
DON'T BE STUPID! I NEED A BATH FIRST!
DON'T YOU KNOW HOW MANY TEARS AND SWEAT I MADE ALL DAY?
I DIDN'T QUITE GET ALL THAT
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS TAKING CARE OF NATSU! GO AHEAD, TAKE YOUR TIME!
EAT UP!
THANKS FOR HAVING ME.
PAT
PAT
PAT
WELL, NICE TO MEET-CHA!
ERICA, WAS IT?

I got an even better idea. How about I sing you a lullaby?
Read me a bedtime story!
But Satsuki's not here yet!
No!
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T RUIN IT. NO MATTER WHAT.
I MAY NOT BE TIED TO KAJITSU BY BLOOD, BUT..
THE ONLY REASON KAJITSU AND I ARE JUST BROTHER AND SISTER SO FAR..
...THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE I HAVE TO CALL HOME.
I THINK I MIGHT BREAK UP WITH TODA-KUN.
...IS SO THAT EVERYONE CAN BE HAPPY.

YOU DON'T KNOW ANY-THING.
HERE YOU GO.
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW...
...WHY I STARTED GOING OUT WITH HIM.
MY OLDER BROTHER'S BEEN ALONE HIS WHOLE LIFE.
SO HE VALUES HIS FAMILY MORE THAN ANYTHING.
IT'S LIKE THE ONLY THING HE LIVES FOR
BON APPETIT!
IS IT OKAY TO EAT THIS?
I'M NOT TELLING!
WH... WHY?
Rub-a-dub dub, thanks for the grub!
YEAH!
THIS IS DELICIOUS, ISN'T IT?

WHY WON'T HE BREAK UP WITH ME?
HE COULD'VE CARED LESS WHO HE PICKED...
HOW STUPID! I KNOW YOU'RE HAPPY...
...SO WHY NOT SHOW IT?
WHY IS HE BEING SO NICE TO ME?
EXCUSE ME?
IT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT SERIOUS THAT I'M GOING OUT WITH HIM!
WHAT DO MY...
IF I REALLY WERE SERIOUS...
...IT'D BE ALL OVER!
DON'T YOU GET IT!?
YOUR HALF-ASSED ATTITUDE MAKES ME SICK! YOU SHOULD BREAK UP WITH HIM!
I PUT UP WITH YOU GUYS GOING OUT BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU REALLY LIKED EACH OTHER!

IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
I DON'T...
...CARE ANYMORE.
SO I'LL DO YOU A FAVOR AND DISAPPEAR.
...IF I WERE GONE, TOO, RIGHT?
I'M SURE YOU'D BE HAPPIER...
AND IT'S UNCOM-FORTABLE BUTTING IN BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE IN LOVE
AT FIRST, I WAS ATTRACTED BECAUSE HE WAS NEW AND DIFFERENT BUT NOW I'M BORED WITH HIM.
I SHOULD STOP THIS RIGHT HERE!
...OVER ANYONE AGAIN.
...CRY...
I DON'T WANT TO..
SLAP

29 Summer and Fevers
WHIIR
Bzzt
Bzzt
Bzzt
AFTER THAT.
I DIDN'T HEAR ONE WORD FROM HER AGAIN
.. THAT I'M GOING OUT WITH HIM!
IT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT SERIOUS ..
EVEN NATSU WON'T TELL ME.
FLOP
I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW THOSE TWO ARE DOING NOW

WHAT DO MY FEELINGS MATTER ANYMORE?
AT LEAST...
...THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I DON'T GET WHAT YOU'RE SAYING

#29 Summer and Fevers

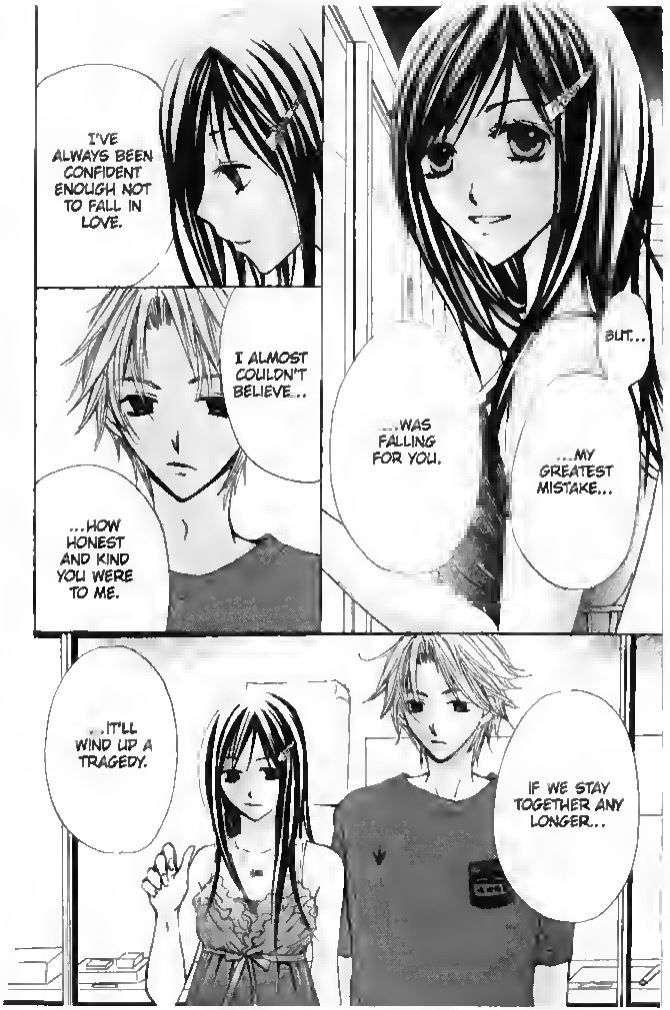
THADUMP
THADUMP
THADUMP
WHEN I GET BACK...
HE ALMOST GAVE ME A HEART ATTACK.
THADUMP
...I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
SO WAIT FOR ME, OKAY?
I can only see the strings.
Shudder
"Hey, Literary Master, will you play in the red-light district?"
— Akai version

HEY.
BLINK
Hm?
AAH...
THAT'S THE SOUND OF NATSU'S CELL PHONE
I'M GOING OUT FOR A BIT.
OH.
OKAY.

IT'S CALMING
AND THERE'S USUALLY SO FEW PEOPLE HERE THAT.
I DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD ONE OF THESE
WELL, WE DO
...I DON'T FEEL LIKE CRYING.
I'VE NEVER CRIED IN FRONT OF SOMEONE
THAT WAS A REAL MISTAKE.
THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TO FORGET.
IT'LL BE MY LAST REQUEST.

ER...
OKAY.
GOT IT.
SEE YOU WHEN YOU GET BACK
SEE YOU LATER.

CAN I...
...ASK YOU ONE THING?
WAS IT TRUE YOU ONLY WENT OUT WITH ME...
...ON A WHIM?
NO.
IT MUST'VE BEEN LAST JUNE.
I SAW YOU AND YOUR SISTER IN A PARK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT


I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CONFIDENT ENOUGH NOT TO FALL IN LOVE.
I ALMOST COULDN'T BELIEVE...
...HOW HONEST AND KIND YOU WERE TO ME.
BUT...
...WAS FALLING FOR YOU.
...MY GREATEST MISTAKE...
...IT'LL WIND UP A TRAGEDY.
IF WE STAY TOGETHER ANY LONGER...

THAT SCENE...
...I COULD NEVER BELIEVE.
...WAS ONE...
I THOUGHT BY GETTING CLOSE TO YOU I COULD UNMASK YOUR TRUE CHARACTER.
...WAS LIKE INSIDE.
...JUST WHAT HER PRECIOUS OLDER BROTHER...
I WANTED TO SHOW HER...

THAT MUST'VE BEEN WHEN KAJITSU WENT TO LIVE AT NANO-CHAN'S HOUSE FOR A WHILE
HUH
...I SENSED SOMETHING GOING ON UNDERNEATH
EVEN THOUGH YOU TWO LOOKED INNOCENT ON THE SURFACE...
I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, "AH, SO THAT MUST BE THE RUMORED TODA SIBLINGS."
YOU WERE SITTING IN FRONT OF THE SWINGS.
YOU HAD YOUR ARM AROUND YOUR SISTER AS SHE CRIED.
...I COULD TAKE A PHOTO AND POST IT ALL OVER THE SCHOOL.
I THOUGHT IF YOU KISSED...
I thought it'd be fun.
YOU WERE WATCHING US?
WHAT FOR?
THEN YOU WENT HOME
YOU JUST HELD HER WHILE SHE CRIED.
TURN
BUT NOTHING HAPPENED.
WHY YOU LITTLE...
You're terrible.

I...
FOR THAT, I'M SORRY.
AND I MADE YOU CRY.
...BUT I HURT YOU.
IT'S NOT JUST THAT I COULDN'T RETURN YOUR FEELINGS...
TODA-KUN.
A COMPLETE AND UTTER DEFEAT.
THAT'S WHY I'VE LOST.
...SOMEONE AS TWO-FACED AS ME.
I'M SORRY FOR MAKING YOU GO OUT WITH...
...YOU NEVER BETRAYED YOUR SISTER.
...THOUGH YOU WERE ALWAYS SO NICE TO ME...
BUT...

I WAS NEVER HURT.
...WAS ALWAYS ON THE VERGE OF TEARS.
I JUST...
JUST CRY MY HEART OUT IN YOUR ARMS.
I WISHED THAT I COULD CRY..
...JUST LIKE HER BACK THEN.
I...
...WANTED TO BE LIKE HER.

I...
...ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE I LIKE.
I'M SORRY.
...I KNOW.
...I KNOW.

HERE'S
...FAR ENOUGH.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU IN THE LIBRARY ROOM THAT DAY?
...
AND LISTEN
I LIKE YOU
GO OUT WITH ME!
IF I SAID THE SAME THING NOW..
...HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER ME?

Short story at the end of the book

Girlfriend only
For graduation Trip
I wrote this in February
of 2004

It's a cute love comedy
about a cute girl and cute
boy

This story has a lot to do
with snowboarding, so I had a
lot of fun getting to draw
the goggles and ski gloves.

And just so you know I can't
snowboard worth a damn...I'm
just not made for life in the
snowy mountains (I catch
a cold in no time) so I'd be
toast before I even got on
a snowboard.

I'm so sorry for being weak...

BRRRR
IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE I'M GLAD I HAVE AN OLDER BROTHER!
THANK GOD FOR MODERN TECHNOLOGY!
PHEW, DOES THAT FEEL GOOD! ♫
He's the one that bought the air-conditioning
FIDGET
FIDGET
FIDGET

Smother
WHA--
I LIKE YOU.
...YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT NEXT TIME.
AND THEN
LET'S JUST TAKE IT EASY THIS TIME AROUND.
OKAY?

ぴこーん
SO...WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
FIDGET
FIDGET
FIDGET
WONDER WHY HE'S SO FIDGETY.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
WHAT!?
I BROKE UP WITH ERICA TODAY.
ER...UH, YOU SEE...
NAG
WHAT!? WHO!?
NATSU!
YOU WENT OUT WITH HER WHEN YOU ALREADY LIKED SOMEONE ELSE!?
NAG
IT'S JUST THAT...I ALREADY LIKE SOMEONE ELSE
mumble mumble
NO, NOT THAT.
DON'T TELL ME IT'S BECAUSE SHE WAS CRYING IN THE HOUSE THE OTHER DAY!

...I'LL FIGHT HIM.
Sometimes, it takes time.
I've been working hard!
..I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES.
WHETHER IT MEANS BEGGING FOR MERCY, OR FIGHTING HIM...
I'LL FIGHT TARO.
ARE YOU SURE IT'S OKAY?
BUT YOU AND ONII-CHAN..
IF IT'S FOR YOUR SAKE, KAJITSU
...HAVE ALWAYS GOTTEN ALONG SO WELL.

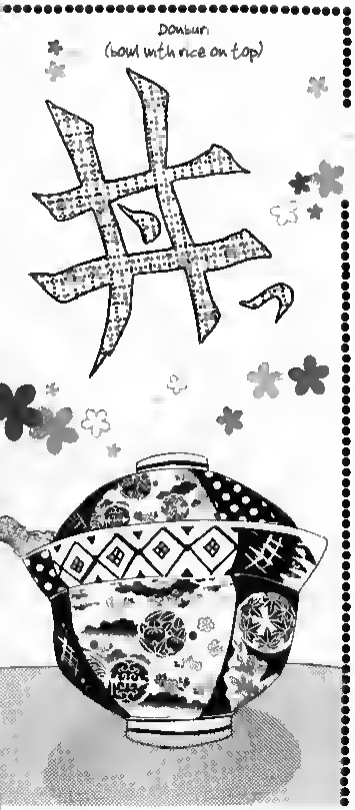
I LIKE YOU
...JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE KAJITSU.
NOT AS A BIG SISTER.
OR EVEN AS PART OF THE FAMILY.
I LOVE YOU.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
SO..
...I NEED TO TALK TO TARO ABOUT IT.
I KNOW HE WON'T ALLOW IT IMMEDIATELY, BUT...
...UNTIL HE DOES.
NOD
NOD
NOD

HM, TOO FAR AWAY.
OH, REALLY?
JUST A LITTLE CLOSER..
OKAY, THEN.
.....

KAJIT-SU
WHAT DO I DO..?
HM...
I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY YEARS IT'LL TAKE..
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
..BUT I'LL WORK MY HARDEST.
JUST KIDDING.
THIS IS FOR YOUR SAKE, NATSU!
KISS

MORE..
DINGLE
MORE...
A LITTLE MORE

Donburi
(bowl with rice on top)



BUT JUST FOR NOW...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ORDERING OUT ONCE IN A WHILE?
I'M GOING TO EAT OVER THERE
SAY SOME-THING!
NAT-SU!
Awkwardly.
Do you hate your older brother that much!?
MUNCH
MUNCH
THIS IS..
...JUST FOR NOW..
SIGH...

NA-MASTE!*
That's a greeting, you know.
*See translator's notes
TIME TO..
...EAT!
DIDN'T YOU HAVE TIME TO COOK?
KAJITSU, WHY DID YOU HAVE TO ORDER OUT?
YEAH, *TENDON! 'AN LOTSA SHRIMP! ♫
I love your home-cooking
GULP
BOOO
BOO BOO
HUH!?
WELL TODAY..
..I COULDN'T FIND THE TIME...
...TO MAKE SOME-THING.
*See translator's notes
WELL, LOOK! I MADE SOME MISO SOUP, AT LEAST!
B-BUSY WITH?
WHAT WERE YOU SO BUSY WITH?
MUNCH
SHEESH!
MUNCH
MUNCH

MANO-CHAN!
WHEEW!
HOW WAS YOUR TRIP?
LONG TIME NO SEE! HOW'VE YOU BEEN!?
JUST AWESOME! THE OCEAN WAS SO PRETTY! ♫
HEEEEY! KAJITSU-CHAN!
I DIDN'T GO OUT MUCH
HA HA HA
KAJITSU-CHAN, YOU HAVEN'T TANNED AT ALL!
UNFORTU-NATELY!
I COULDN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE
BY THE WAY, THERE'S SOME-THING--
OH! I ALMOST FORGOT! I GOT YOU SOMETHING!

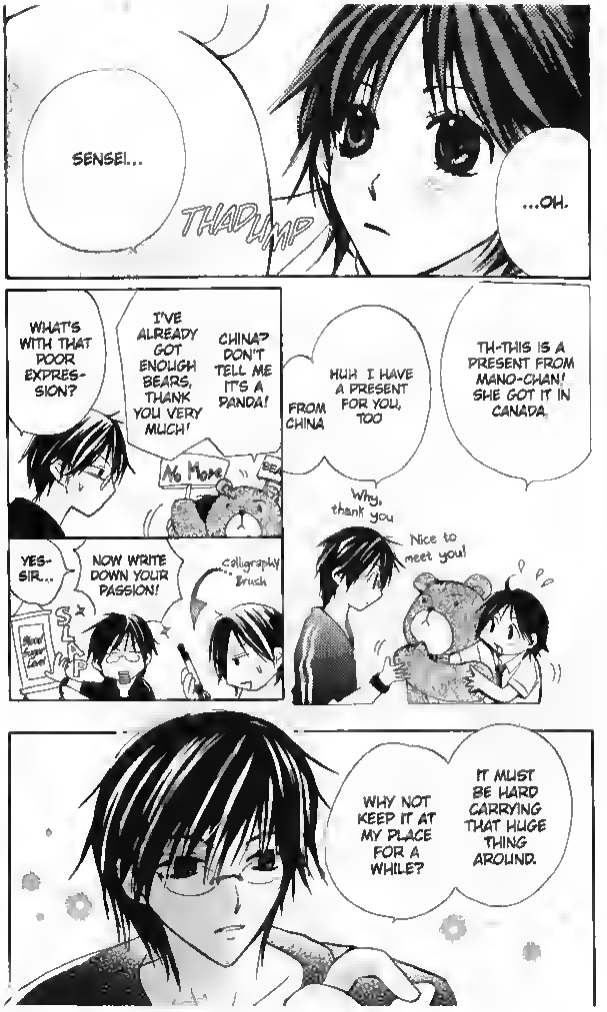
THIS MIGHT BE HARDER THAN I THOUGHT.
...WE'LL KEEP THIS A SECRET.
CAN'T GIVE UP NOW!
Hmmm
AND IT WON'T TAKE LONG FOR RUMIKO-SAN TO NOTICE.
TARO'S ALWAYS BEEN THE SHARP ONE.

AND THEN SUMMER...
...ENDED

JUST HOW DID MANO-CHAN MANAGE TO LUG THIS THING ALL THE WAY TO SCHOOL?
SHE'S ONE STRANGE GIRL.
TMP
TMP
TMP
Hm?
WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT! IT'S A BEAR!
PRETTY RARE SEEING ONE WALK AROUND HERE!
GRUFF
HEY!
WHO YOU CALLIN' A BEAR!?
Gimme your name!
WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING?

A BEAR!
FWOMP
YEAH, I GOT IT FROM CANADA!
THIS IS...ONE HUGE...BEAR!
WHOA
OH! AI-CHAN! GOOD MORN-ING!
THANKS A LOT BUT LISTEN, I...
I DON'T GET IT
I thought you were going to see the moon.
WELL, KAJITSU-CHAN, GOTTA GO!
WAAIT!
WH-WHAAAAT?
MANO-CHAAAAN?
...I REALLY WISH I COULD TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT IT.
TMP
TMP
TMP
I WANTED TO KEEP IT A SECRET, BUT...
AW, MAN.

PHEW
IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT!
NO, THAT'S OKAY!
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...
TURN
...YOU'VE GROWN AWFULLY... WOMAN-LIKE.
HUH? TODA-SAN.
IN THE SHORT TIME I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU...
AAAACK!
I...I--!
I KNOW.
S-SENSEI, PLEASE!
DON'T DO THAT ANYMORE!


SENSEI...
THADUMP
...OH.
WHAT'S WITH THAT POOR EXPRES-SION?
I'VE ALREADY GOT ENOUGH BEARS, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
CHINA? DON'T TELL ME IT'S A PANDA!
No More
YES-SIR...
NOW WRITE DOWN YOUR PASSION!
Calligraphy Brush
HUH I HAVE A PRESENT FOR YOU, TOO
FROM CHINA
TH-THIS IS A PRESENT FROM MANO-CHAN! SHE GOT IT IN CANADA.
Why, thank you
Nice to meet you!
WHY NOT KEEP IT AT MY PLACE FOR A WHILE?
IT MUST BE HARD CARRYING THAT HUGE THING AROUND.

OH, AND ONE MORE THING, TODA-SAN.
SNIFFLE
FAREWELL, SENSEI.
SENSEI...
THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.
YOU'VE GIVEN ME SO MANY WONDERFUL MEMORIES.
DON'T THINK THAT I'VE...
...GIVEN UP ON YOU YET.
Halo
AND I'LL NEVER FORGET.

I WAS JUST SAYING HELLO.
SEE YOU LATER
PROBABLY SENSEI.
...COULD NEVER REALLY BE SERIOUS.
...ABOUT A LITTLE KID LIKE ME.
Boy, was I presumptuous.
YOU REALLY ARE AN ADULT.
I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT YOU ANYMORE.
I...
...LIKE YOU.
SENSEI...

#30 Until Dawn
30

IT'S AN UNBREAKABLE RULE!
..YOU HAVE TO GO OUT AND TAKE IT.
YOU'RE SO NAÏVE, TODA-SAN. IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT..
PAT
PAT
PAT
...IF I PLAN TO GIVE UP ON THEM
I DON'T TELL GIRLS THAT I LIKE THEM..
HUH?
BUT, JUST THE OTHER DAY, I--
KISS
BYE-BYE, THEN.
LOVE YOU..
...DAR-LING
Whoooosh
SENSEI...
OR SHOULD I SAY, THINGS HAVE JUST GOTTEN WORSE?
JUST AS SIMPLE AS ALWAYS
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE LIKE THAT?

HE MIGHT JUST FOOL AROUND FOR FUN.
OF COURSE...
SEN-SEI'S NOT SERIOUS. HE'S TOO POPULAR FOR THAT.
BUT IF HE WERE SERIOUS...
BUT WHY ME OF ALL GIRLS?
Sunken
GLUB
GLUB
GLUB
SLIP
Eeek!
I'm sorry and you right up!
IF SENSEI REALLY LIKED ME, THEN...!
ALL THE WAY OUT HERE. ...I WOULDN'T BE SUR-PRISED.
THIS WAY, NO ONE WILL SEE US HERE
But Natsu was the one who suggested they come to this out-
Meet me on a deserted island! Enca See map below
If the place Erica had called Natsu to had been
SIGH

...YOU HAVE TO GO OUT AND TAKE IT.
IT'S AN...
...UNBREAKABLE RULE.
I JUST DON'T GET...
...SENSEI.

KNOCK
KNOCK
KAJITSU! CAN I COME IN?
OH!
SURE!
EWUFF
WHOA! IT'S HOT IN HERE!
HOW CAN YOU USE THE BLOW-DRYER ... IN THIS HEAT!?
RUB
RUB
RUB
RUB
YOU'RE SWEATING!
THIS ISN'T A SAUNA, YOU KNOW
UPH!
HE'S RIGHT. IT IS HOT!
ARE YOU STUPID?
Armpit
AND RIGHT HERE! Tee hee!
RUB
RUB
OH, AND HERE! ♡
AND DON'T FORGET OVER HERE! ♡
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT.
AND HERE!
AAAH, I'M SO HAPPY! ♡
I'VE GOT SOME SWEAT, HERE, TOO!
NATSU! ♡

HEE HEE!
HERE'S THE NEW BRA I BOUGHT! ♡
HAPPY
HAPPY
HAPPY
I WANNA SHOW IT TO NATSU! ♫
OUT WE GO
I'M STARTING TO FEEL DIZZY
THAT'D JUST MEAN A LOT OF TROUBLE!
SPLOSH
WAIT A SEC.
HAA
THIS IS NO TIME TO BE GETTING ALL HAPPY.
HERE I AM, ACTUALLY PRAYING THAT SENSEI'S NOT SERIOUS ABOUT ME.
I'M JUST A NO-GOOD KID, AFTER ALL.
VOOOOM

GRAB
HUUUG
AAAH.
I LIKE IT, BUT...
WELL I GUESS IT MAKES ME HAPPY.
WH-WHY IS HE DOING THIS!?
?
?
HUUUG
HOW DO YOU FEEL?
I CAN LIVE WITH THIS!
THIS IS ALL I NEED!
OH, FORGET IT! WHY THINK ABOUT ANYTHING!?
Huh?
ARE THEY GONE?
YOU FEEL A LITTLE BETTER?
ARE YOUR WORRIES LIGHTENED A LITTLE?

I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT STUFF.
MMM...
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO TAKE SUCH LONG BATHS
KAJITSU
SPLASH
SPLASH
REALLY! I'M FINE! DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
LIKE I COULD EVER TELL NATSU MY WORRIES.
IT'S OKAY. I'M PROBABLY JUST WORRYING TOO MUCH.
YOU MEAN... ABOUT TARO?
NO, NOTHING THAT SERIOUS
HM?
BUT I JUST CAN'T TELL HIM!
Hmm...
OH NO, NOW I'VE GOT HIM WORRIED!
PANIC
PANIC

TA-DA!
I BOUGHT THIS NEW BRA TODAY!
OH! I ALMOST FORGOT!
FLAP
BEL
BUT I AM LOOKING
Mumble
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOW ME.
Mumble mumble
Look! Look!
RIGHT HERE!
AREN'T THESE RIBBONS JUST THE CUTEST?
BUT I LIKE WHAT'S INSIDE OF IT.
Mumble
Mumble UH, TO BE HONEST, I'M NOT THAT INTERESTED IN LINGERIE
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH. COVER YOURSELF UP ALREADY.
RATTLE
HOW ARE LONG ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN THERE?
KAJITSU, YOU'RE TAKING FOREVER!
SLAM!

NOW, WHAT SHOULD I DO?
HMM, NO GOOD, HUH?
OR WAS IT NO GOOD?
I LIKE YOU!
ONE MORE TIME
I LOVE YOU!
THOOM
ONE MORE TIME! ONE MORE TIME!
I LIKE YOU!
JUST OOOOONE MORE TIME!
I LIKE YOU!
NUUUUG
Hey, no biting now
JUST ONCE MORE!
IT WASN'T ENOUGH!
NOT ENOUGH AT ALL!
I LIKE YOU!

YOU WERE...
GRIIIN
...MASSAGING HER BREASTS!

WHAT A PERVERTED SMILE!
I WASN'T MASSAG-ING THEM!
MY HAND JUST LANDED THERE!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR EXCUSES! I'M SURE YOU'VE MASSAGED THEM COUNTLESS TIMES ALREADY!
SHIVER

YOU TWO ARE BREAST-MASSAGING BUDDIES! ♡
SHUT UP!
HO HO HO
AH, SHEESH. THAT WOMAN'S THE WORST!
I'M JUST GLAD IT WAS MOM.
IF IT HAD BEEN ONII-CHAN...
Rumiko on the sofa

N-NO! I WAS JUST TRYING TO PULL HER SHIRT DOWN!
PAT
OH!
SILENCE
That's why I said to cover up!
Accidentally put his hand on it

I WAS THINKING HOW COOL YOU ARE.
AND HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU
NOPE. JUST THE OPPO-SITE.
Pat
OH!
YOU PROBABLY THINK I SOUND LIKE A LITTLE KID.
EVEN NOW, I ADMIRE SENSEI.
TELL ME MORE.
Ha ha ha!
WHAT WAS THAT?

...IT WOULD HAVE BEEN RAINING BLOOD.
KAJIT-SU I SWEAR I'LL PROTECT YOU
TRUST... ...ME
TRUST ME AND JUST WAIT A LITTLE LONGER.
BUMP
AAH...
I WANT TO GROW UP FASTER.

YUP!
THEN HE DOES PUSH-UPS, AND SIT-UPS.
SHADOW BOXING
I GUESS IT'S BEEN ABOUT A MONTH.
OOH, REALLY?
NATSU-KUN RUNS LAPS EVERY MORNING?
I'LL ADMIT, HE HAS GROWN MORE— MASCULINE LATELY
AND I ALREADY KNOW HE'S POPULAR.
YOU MEAN YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
HUH?
NATSU IS SO...
.. COOL

NATSU.
I WANTED TO GROW UP SO FAST..
WHETHER OR NOT..
...SENSE LOOKED LIKE PAPA...
I THINK I ALWAYS LOVED SENSEI'S MATURITY.
...I PANICKED.
I'M SURE I CAN WAIT FOR IT.
I'M SURE I CAN BELIEVE AND WAIT FOR IT.

HERE COME THE 3RD YEARS.
OH!
LOOKS LIKE THE 3RD YEARS WIN HOW SCARY!
THEY CHASED OUT THE 1ST YEARS!
OOOH!
ER, LISTEN.
HA HA HA
SLAM
ばん
LOOK!
I'M SURE HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
I'M GOING TO GO HELP NATSU!
I CAN'T JUST STAND HERE AND WATCH!
HUH?
TWITCH
TWITCH

EVER SINCE HE BROKE UP WITH ERICA...
...GIRLS WON'T LEAVE HIM ALONE DURING BREAKS.
ZOOOOM
SEE? THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN
IT'S THOSE 1ST YEARS.
HM!...
AND THIS GOES ON ALL THE TIME.

THANKS.
SULK
L-LET'S GO
SULK
SULK
HMPH!
Where did that confidence come from?
EEK!
OH, THOSE 3RD YEARS ...
...ARE SO SCARY! ♡
Ah, that felt good. ♥
strut strut strut
opposite
WHEN SHE SAID "SCARY" SHE .. BEEN MUST'VE TALKING ABOUT HERSELF.
Yeah.
W-WOW...
YOU JUST CAN'T FOLLOW THAT.

QUIT BLOCKING THE DOORWAY!
BEAT IT!
YOU LISTEN HERE...
YOU SURE ARE CHEEKY FOR A LITTLE 2ND YEAR!
I CAN GO WHEREVER I PLEASE.
BIG DEAL, YOU'RE A YEAR OLDER, YOU OLD HAGS!
IT'S NOT RIGHT FOR AN EX-GIRLFRIEND TO BE HANG-ING AROUND, NOW IS IT?

I SEE
YUP
I HAVE TO SET EVERYTHING UP
WHAT? YOU'RE GOING TO THE HOME ECONOMICS ROOM?
I HEARD HE'S BEEN PRETTY FLIRTY WITH THE GIRLS.
BUT THAT TEACHER...
Tomo
ABOUT YOU
I'M WORRIED..

What's with that cute smile?
HEY..
THE ONLY ONE HE REALLY TEASES IS POOR KAJITSU-CHAN!
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
YOU TWO JUST TAKE YOUR TIME, HERE.
YOU'RE SUCH A WORRY-WART!
OH, HITO-KUN!
WELL, THAT'S A RELIEF!
Tee hee hee!
Ha ha ha!
Tarenge!
Myh oh my
*See translator's notes

BUT...
I JUST CAN'T IMAGINE IT!
ERICA-SAN'S DEFINITELY NOT THE TYPE TO GET TOO HUNG UP ON SOMEONE
DOESN'T SHE?
STILL, LOOKING BETTER THAN I THOUGHT.
HER. I MEAN
...NO ONE HAS ANY IDEA..
...THAT JUST A FEW DAYS LATER, THIS VERY SAME GIRL...
...WOULD FALL IN LOVE WITH A MOST UNLIKELY SOULMATE.
Oh! Mano-chan!
Hey there!
Hm? Who is it?

A-AKAI-SENSEI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I DIDN'T EAT BREAK-FAST THIS MORN-ING
TOMA, MORE FOOD.
NUMBER ONE!
WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS POOR GUY ALONE, HE WON'T EAT RIGHT.
GO BACK, WILL YOU? ♡
STUTTER
Stutter
Go back?
G-G-GO BACK? ARE YOU CRAZY? SENSEI AND I AREN'T IN THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP ANYMORE!
YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT ALL THOSE DAYS...
...WE WERE SO IN LOVE, THE WAY I'D ALWAYS RUB YOUR THIGH WITH MY HIPBONE...
SIGH...
OUR HEARTS COULD NOT BE BOUND BY OUR BODIES
QUIT MAKING STUFF UP!
hiss
SMIRK SMIRK SMIRK
OH-HOOOO. IS THAT SO?

WELCOME! ♫
TOMA-SENSEI, I'M HERE TO PREPARE FOR THE CLASS LESS--
--ON.
YO.
WHY YOU LITTLE--
YOU LOOKING FOR A FIGHT?
IT'S... IT'S HERE!
WAAAH!

WILL YOU MAKE ME A BOXED LUNCH EVERYDAY?
NO, I CAN'T DO THAT!
PLEASE, STOP SAYING WEIRD THINGS!
AND EAT YOUR FOOD RIGHT!

FREEZE
!!
YOU KNOW THAT, TOO, RIGHT?
IT'LL BE A DRAG FOR YOU, EVEN IF YOU ONLY WORRY ABOUT ME IN YOUR FREE TIME.
THEN, FORGET ABOUT IT
JAB JAB
TH-THE...
BUT IT HASN'T CHANGED THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SPECIAL TO ME!
I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT TO DO
WELL, I...

OH MY
.....
I WORRY ABOUT YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE SPECIAL.
AT LEAST LET ME... WORRY.
EXCUSE ME!?
I'M SO MOVED!
GLOMP

LISTEN.
DROP THE DEADBEAT, AND HOOK UP WITH ME INSTEAD!
I SWEAR I'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY FOR LIFE!
LIKE I CAN BELIEVE YOU!?
YOU TWO DO KNOW YOU'RE STILL IN SCHOOL, RIGHT?
NOT THAT I MIND

YOU'LL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR YOUR NIGHTLY FANTASIES. ♡
BUT MORE THAN A BOXED LUNCH...
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?
...EVEN JUST ONCE...
...I WANT TO EAT IT NAKED.
YOU IDIOT!!
IS THAT ANYTHING FOR A TEACHER TO SAY!?

I'M ALL CAUGHT UP IN THE TEACHERS' PACE AS USUAL.

I USUALLY LIKE TO WRITE.
I HAVEN'T WRITTEN IN MY DIARY LATELY.
OR ANY LETTERS.
DID SENSEI LIKE WRITING CHARACTERS?
HERE I AM, STILL PANICKING
I WONDER IF...
...I'LL ALWAYS BE LIKE THIS.
FUZZ
RUB
RUB
RUB
WAS IT JUST MY IMAGINATION?
WAS MY HAND GLOWING?
WHAT THE---? WHAT WAS THAT?
IT'S JUST A HAND. JUST A REGULAR HAND.
Wiggle
Wiggle
ALMOST SCARED MYSELF.
OF COURSE IT WAS. HA HA HA...

INSTEAD OF KEEPING A SERIOUS DISTANCE. .
...FOOLING AROUND LIKE THIS...
...IS MUCH MORE FUN.
...IS SO KIND.
SENSEI...
COOL NATSU
COOL SENSEI.
AND COOL ERICA-SAN.
.....

IF I WANTED TO...
IF I WANTED TO GRAB SOMETHING...
...ALL I'D HAVE WAS MY HAND.
...MAKE A MIRACLE...
BUT, MAYBE...

Condor Delivery
Onii-chan, how are you doing? This is Natsu. I've got a little favor to ask for once!♡
Condor Delivery City Business Office *Taro Toda-sama
WHO'S IT FROM?
?
RIP
RIP
RIP
A LETTER?
TARO!
YOU'VE GOT A LETTER!
NOT SURE, BUT IT'S ADDRESSED TO YOU.
*See translator's notes
RUMIKO! WHAT'S THAT WOMAN THINKING!?
Oops, did he figure me out?
HOW COULD THIS BE FROM NATSU!?

Keep next Friday open!

...I challenge you to a fight.

But I know that you won't let us be together that way, so...

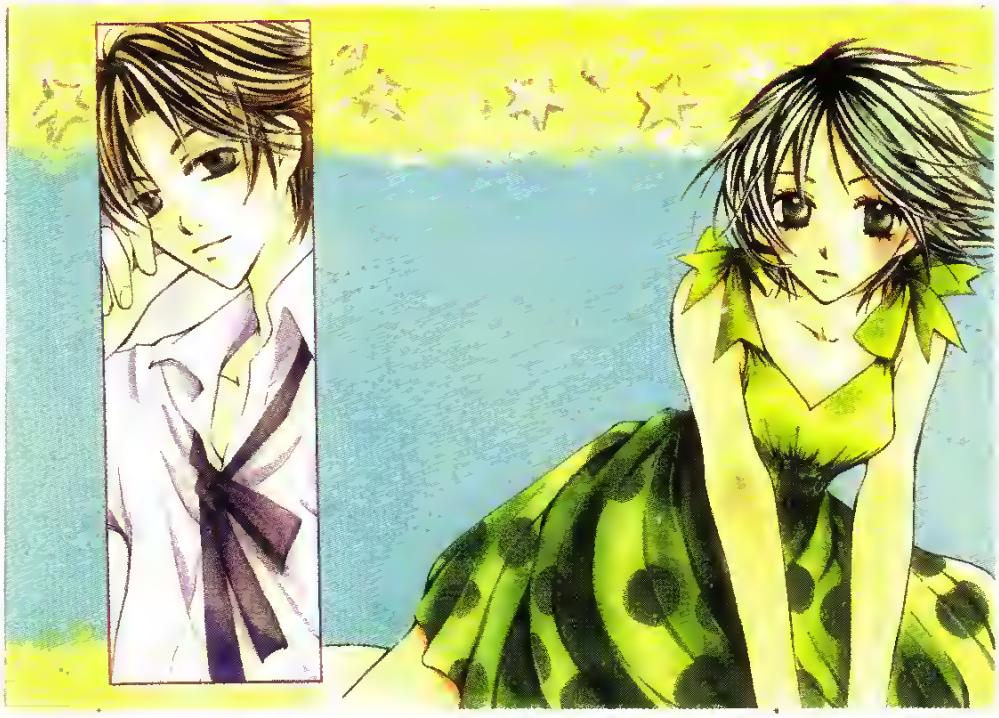
It's the truth...

To be honest, Kajitsu and I are very much in love.

...BEGAN TO MOVE...
...EVER SO SLOWLY
THAT DAY, A BREEZE...
Yaawn
...BLEW GENTLY PAST US.
DINGLE
AND THEN THE CLOUDS..
I SEE... MUMBLE
HEY! TARO! COME OVER HERE FOR A SECOND!
WHILE MY BACK WAS TURNED..
MUM-BLE
...THOSE TWO... ...WERE MAKING A FOOL OF ME!
MUM-BLE
OH, NA-CHAN!
LISTEN UP! TODAY, RUN-RUN...
..SENT OUT THE CHALLENGE TO TARO-CHAN IN YOUR PLACE! ♡
THE FIGHT TAKES PLACE ON FRIDAY! ♡
SPLUTTER
THE WHOLE GROUP'S TOGETHER FOR A REGULAR FESTIVAL IN HELL!
WELL ISN'T THAT NICE OF THEM TO DO!
HIIISSS

Hayami san and Na chan s Story
THEY WERE A GIFT FROM ERICA WHEN I GOT MY EARS PIERCED!
AS PROOF OF OUR FRIEND-SHIP, ALWAYS WEAR THEM, OKAY?
IS WHAT SHE SAID.
YOU MUST REALLY LIKE THEM, HUH?
HAYAMI-SAN, YOU ALWAYS WEAR THOSE EAR-RINGS.
SO NO MATTER WHAT HAP-PENS ..
However
A Few Days Later
WHY DON'T YOU CHANGE THEM? THEY LOOK SO LAME
JEEZ, YOU'RE ALWAYS WEARING THE SAME EARRINGS
.....
Forgot about it completely, as usual
...I WILL WEAR THEM ALWAYS!
LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP!!
I DON'T NEED YOUR PITY!
I DIDN'T SAY ANY-THING!
OW! THAT HURTS!
TUG
TUG
TUG
TUG
They actually make a good pair
The End

crossroad



Less than siblings, more than friends...

Summer's in full sway; it's hot outside...and even hotter inside. Kajitsu has to make the most important decision in her life about Akai-sensei. Meanwhile, her arch-rival Erica's relationship with Natsu takes an unexpected turn – one that could throw fuel on the fire of Natsu's and Kajitsu's own forbidden feelings!

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